

Kistel due on state visit next week

AMMAN (J.T.) — Upon the invitation of His Majesty King Hussein, Dr. Thomas Kistel, the president of the Federal Republic of Austria, will be paying a state visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the International Press Office of the Royal Palace said Monday. President Kistel will be staying in Jordan from April 11-13, it said. President Kistel will be paid a private visit to Jordan in September and during that visit the King invited him to pay a state visit. The King visited Austria in January on his return home from the United States after medical check-ups and talks with President Bill Clinton.

Jordan Times

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Draft laws on elections, districts in the works

AMMAN (J.T.) — Interior Minister Salameh Hammad said Monday that special committees were drawing up a draft law on elections and another on new administrative divisions concerning different districts.

Speaking during a visit by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to the Interior Ministry, where he chaired part of a meeting attended by provincial governors, Mr. Hammad said that social developments and other factors have necessitated redrawing of administration divisions in Jordan.

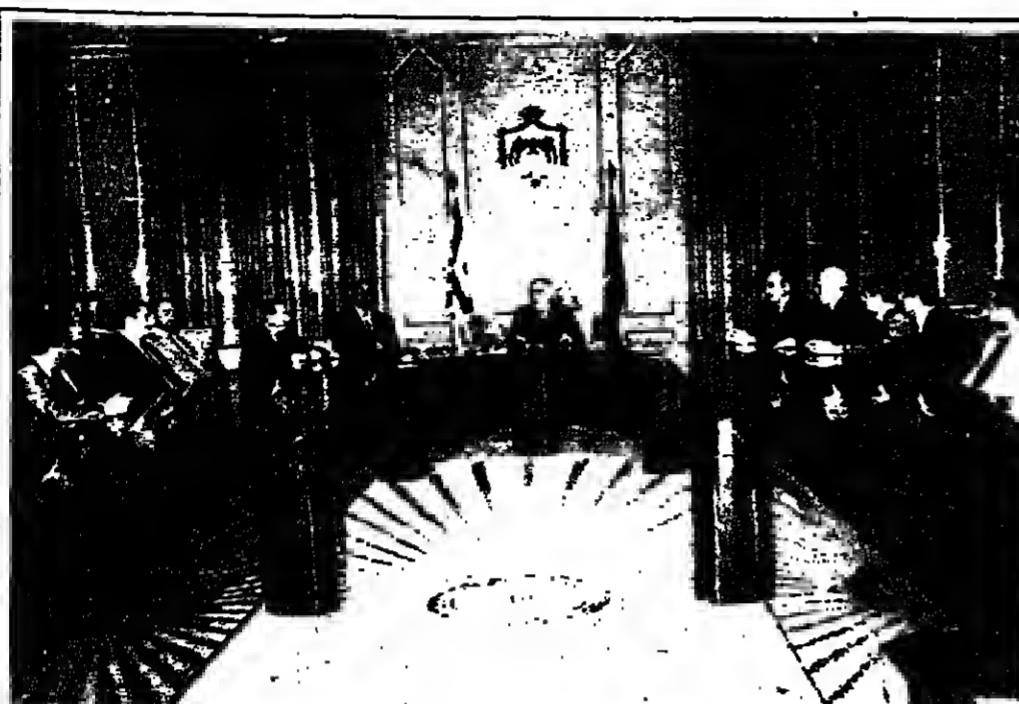
The Civil Status and Passports Department has been entrusted with redrawing voters lists, fixing the optional code number against each voter's name and preparing election cards, Mr. Hammad said.

Dr. Majali, who was briefed on the two draft laws, discussed with provincial governors a number of issues related to their districts.

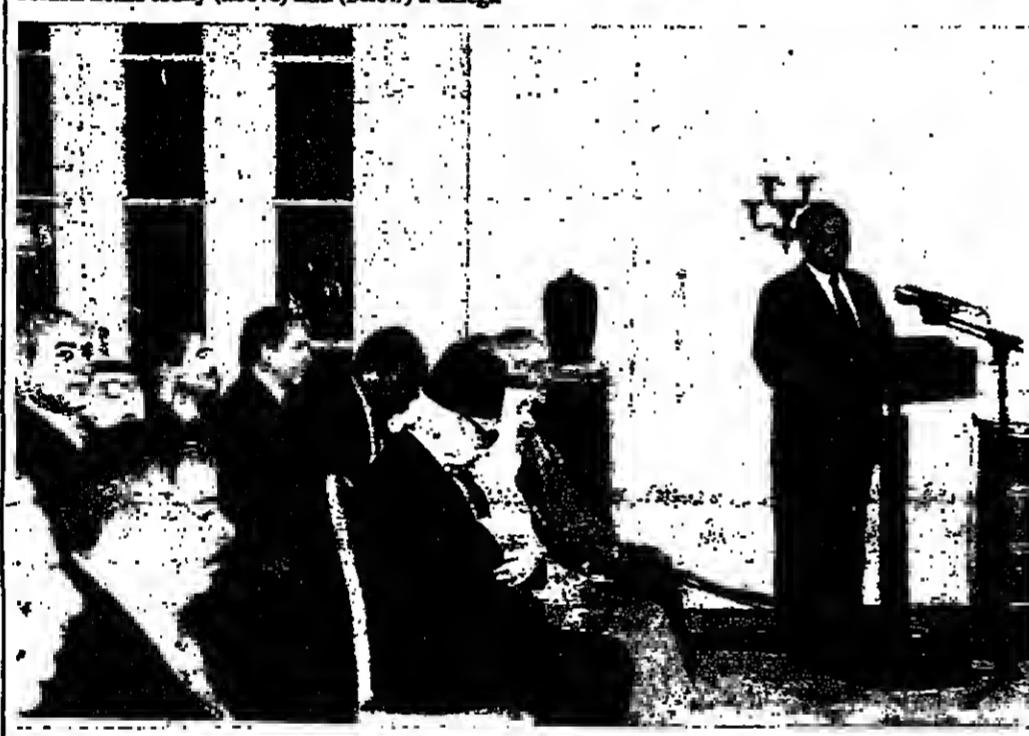
"Serving the inhabitants in their own region is this government's objective because this enhances the concept of decentralisation," Dr. Majali said. "Decentralisation will save the citizen and the state a great deal of effort and unneeded expenses," he said.

According to the present administrative divisions, Jordan has 20 electoral districts but each has varying numbers of seats in Parliament.

The present Election Law, introduced in 1986, was amended in August of last year when the one-person, one-vote system was introduced by the government in the absence of Parliament.



His Majesty King Hussein on Monday meets with some of the Palestinian expellees expected to return home today (above) and (below) a delegation representing Hebronites living in Jordan (Petra photo)



King reaffirms support for Palestinians, voices confidence justice will prevail

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan will continue to provide support to the Palestinian people under occupation and is confident that right and justice will be realised and the Palestinian lands will be liberated, His Majesty King Hussein said Monday.

The King made the comments in two separate meetings, one with a delegation representing the West Bank town of Hebron and the other with a group of Palestinian expellees poised to return home after Israel gave them permission following years in exile.

In the meeting at the Royal

Court, the expellees thanked King Hussein for the good care and hospitality accorded to them while in Jordan and voiced their pride in and appreciation to His Majesty's honourable pan-Arab stands towards the Palestinian people.

King Hussein expressed pride in the steadfastness of the kinsmen in the occupied territories and their attachment to their land.

"The suffering of our kinsmen in the occupied territories and their sacrifices will herald, God willing, a new dawn for the Arab Nation," the King said.

Addressing the delegation representing the citizens of Hebron, King Hussein said: "It is our duty to extend assistance to our brothers and we will continue to do so until the Palestinian people regain their rights and freedom.

"National unity is not only necessary in the face of adversity but it is duty for all of us. We can have no alternative but to confront the dangers and the challenges together."

Referring to the Feb. 25 Hebron Mosque massacre, King Hussein said: "We are destined to offer sacrifices for the sake of our homeland and

this is an honour in us all.

The Jordanian people will remain loyal to their kinsmen in the occupied territory under all circumstances quite confident that Arab rights will be regained," he said.

The King expressed his delight at meeting with the delegation and his pride in their national and courageous stand on their national soil and their steadfastness in the face of the challenges posed by the Israeli occupation.

He stressed that the Palestinian people's sacrifices were offered in defence of

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Israel vetoes return of 3 Arafat aides; other expellees return home today

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A last-minute veto by Israel prevented the return of three Palestinian expellees close to Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat from joining 45 other expellees who return to the occupied territories today.

Scaled down from a list of 49 whom Israel was allowing to return as part of an agreement with the PLO, the 43 expellees, along with up to 25 family members, will enter the West Bank and Gaza today via Jordan and Egypt.

"Twenty-seven deportees will leave Jordan for the occupied territories on Tuesday," confirmed Omar Khatib, deputy chief to the PLO's mission in Amman. "They will take their families with them. The other 16 deportees in Egypt will enter

Gaza from Egypt, also on Tuesday," Mr. Khatib added.

Two expellees allowed to return to the West Bank by Israel left to the occupied territories on Monday on their own and another, Mursi Abu Ghweib, is in the United States and will return later, said officials at the PLO mission in Amman.

"The three men are still in Tunis. Therefore we don't expect any last-minute changes," said Mr. Khatib.

The return to the occupied territories of Mr. Hanieh, senior advisor to Mr. Arafat on occupied territories' affairs, was reportedly blocked by Israeli negotiators in Cairo. "The Israelis felt that Hanieh was too senior, too close to Chairman Arafat to go in this early," one PLO official in Amman told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Rajoub and Mr. Dahlan are also close to the PLO leadership in Tunis, where they were until Monday night, according to PLO officials in Amman. They were seen by the Israelis as "too close to the leadership to return at this time," one official said.

"The three men are still in Tunis. Therefore we don't expect any last-minute changes," said Mr. Khatib.

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the occupied territories the popularity of Mr. Arafat has been waning since the Hebron massacre.

The final details of the return of 27 deportees, originally expected to begin Monday, was announced after Palestine Ambassador to Jordan Tayyeb Abdul Rahim briefed the would-be returnees at the PLO mission in Amman.

"We were told to bring all our identification papers; passports if we have any," said one deportee as he left the PLO mission.

After the meeting, 10 deportees were asked to attend a special farewell meeting with His Majesty King Hussein. Among the 10 were Palestine People's Party activist Tayseer Aroui and Fatah members Amin Ma-

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Blaze in Amman hotel; heart attack kills 1

By a Jordan Times Staff reporter

King follows up on treatment of fire victims

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein on Monday telephoned the hospitals where victims of the fire at Forte Grand Hotel were being treated to inquire about the condition of the injured. He instructed that the best care be accorded to the injured.

Later Monday, King Hussein sent his private Chamberlain Prince Ali Ben Nayef to the Palestine Hospital and King Hussein Medical Centre where the blaze victims are being treated.

Prince Ali conveyed to them the greetings of King Hussein and his best wishes for their speedy recovery.

Health Minister Abdal Rahim Malhas visited also the injured in hospital and wished them speedy recovery.

Speaking to the press afterwards the minister said that most of the victims were suffering from mild cases of suffocation and most of the patients would be discharged soon.

He was bleeding through his nose when he collapsed on the floor while rushing out," said Mr. Kanaan, adding that a medical report later established heart attack as the cause of death.

Colonel Mahmoud Abbadi, deputy chief of the Civil Defence Department (CDD), said the cause of fire, of which his department was notified at 5:33 a.m., was being investigated.

Charles Barker, the hotel's general manager, was quoted as saying by the Associated Press that initial inquiries had shown that the fire was caused by a burning cigarette carelessly tossed on the carpet.

"It was in the hotel and I did not hear any explosion," Mr. Barker, a Briton, was quoted as saying when asked about rumours of a blast. "None of



Charred furniture and furnishings after Monday's fire at Amman's Forte Grand Hotel (photo by Yousef Al 'Amin)

Unmatching shell boosts theory that Goldstein had accomplice

AMMAN (J.T.) — Reinforcing the theory that a second gunman might have participated in the Hebron mosque massacre, a police weapons expert said Monday that one bullet shell found at the site was fired by a Galil rifle they have not found.

Inspector Lior Nadivi of the national police said the mysterious shell was one of 115 bullet casings collected by forensic experts after the Feb. 25 shooting rampage when a Jewish settler killed dozens of worshippers at the Ibrahimi Mosque.

Tests showed that 109 were fired by the Galil rifle used by gunman Baruch Goldstein. Another five were fired by soldiers' rifles, Nadivi added.

Most of the guests were tourists on Easter vacation from Italy, Spain, Britain, Russia and the United States.

Reports that at least one guest jumped out of his win-

gums that I checked."

Palestinian witnesses have testified there was more than one gunman, and the five justice panel suggested during Sooday's session that they were probing prospects that a second assailant was present due to the angle of impact of some bullets.

Justice Eliezer Goldberg, a senior army investigator Brigadier General David Agmon Sunday how Goldstein could have entered through the main entrance, shot several rounds, and travelled 25 metres without being attacked — unless there was an accomplice.

Gen. Agmon, who described the possibility of an accomplice as "possible, but not probable," said he believed Goldstein protected himself by shooting until he had returned to his point of entry — perhaps with the intention of escaping.

A second police forensics expert, Baruch Segal, was not present Monday about

whether he thought there was a second gunman. But his testimony suggested it was possible.

Mr. Segal said that from his examination of bullet trajectories, "I could say that going by the paths that the bullet flew, the shooting came from all corners of the hall."

Mr. Segal was called to the site shortly after the massacre to gather evidence for forensic analysis. He said bullet casings were scattered around the hall, and that their location had "no significance since they could have been moved by the kick of a foot," as victims fled.

In their quest for evidence that could suggest a second gunman was present or that another weapon was fired besides Goldstein's rifle, judges grilled Mr. Segal about his details of his findings.

Panelist Menachem Yaari asked about whether there

(Continued on page 5)

PLO, Israel work on deployment of police

Israelis moving out of Jericho and Gaza; Arafat reportedly planning May visit

CAIRO (Agencies) — Two Palestinian generals joined talks with Israeli in Cairo on Monday as the Middle East peace process prepared to shift from talk to action.

Major-General Nasr Yousef and Abdul Razzaq Al Yahya took part in a meeting on deploying Palestinian police in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

The deployment, expected to start within a week, will be one of the most significant changes on the ground in the occupied territories since Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed an agreement on Palestinian self-rule in Washington last September.

But Gen. Yousef, the commander of Palestinian security forces, said there was no agreement yet on the size of the police force or on when they would go.

"We are ready to move in

immediately. We are awaiting some arrangements. There hasn't been an agreement," he told reporters at the Cairo hotel where the PLO and Israelis are meeting.

Gen. Yahya, asked earlier when the police would deploy, said: "Within a week more or less. There will be a vanguard group of police officers that will enter first to take over military camps and some specific installations."

Norwegian, Danish and Italian representatives met in Cairo separately on Monday to arrange for a separate deployment of foreign observers in the troubled West Bank town of Hebron.

The three European countries have agreed to send up to 160 observers to reassess the Palestinian population, traumatised by the massacre of dozens of Palestinians in the Ibrahimi Mosque in February.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat is

(Continued on page 5)

Oman says Yemeni talks failed, Muscat plans to quit peace efforts

MUSCAT (R) — Oman, which hosted peace talks between Yemen's feuding leaders, said on Monday they had failed to resolve their differences and proposed to withdraw from a multi-national team trying to disengage rival military units.

The Oman News Agency quoted Yousef Ben Alawi Ben Abdullah, Oman's minister of state for foreign affairs, as making the announcement after a second meeting between the leaders of former North and South Yemen on Monday in Oman.

The talks were arranged by Oman's Sultan Qaboos to avert civil war in Yemen after

der areas.

"In the light of this situation, we have to consult with our brothers in Jordan to end our participation in the work of the joint military committee," the Omani minister said.

The military committee was set up after the accord and includes Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh on Sunday was friendly and they agreed on the principles for avoiding military confrontations and the slide towards civil war.

"But for reasons which we do not know, they were not able to agree on a joint statement along these lines when they met on Monday," he said.

(Continued on page 5)



Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf Monday opens the International

Conference on Packing and Packaging (Petra photo)

120 packing, packaging specialists address the future of their industry

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf Monday opened an Arab international conference on packing and packaging by describing the industry as a twin of various agricultural and industrial processes and one that is indispensable for successful trade.

Packing and packaging seeks to protect industrial and food products as well as medicines for later use and for trading with other countries, said Mrs. Khalaf at the opening session.

of the six-day conference. Organised by the Ministry of Industry and Trade in cooperation with the Amman Chamber of Industry and the Arab Union of Food Industries, the conference will address food processing, impediments to packing and packaging in the Arab World, scientific research and training of technicians, modern technology in the industry and the adverse effects of packaging on the environment and human health and solutions to them, such as the safe disposal and recycling of plastics, wood and cardboard.

The concept of establishing a pan-Arab institute to train personnel in the industry will also be discussed.

The conference is attended by 120 participants. On the sidelines of the meeting, a group of international firms are organising an exhibition, displaying the latest equipment and materials used in the packing and packaging industry.

TAKING THE OATH: Jordan's newly-appointed ambassador to Spain Taymon Daghastani Monday is sworn in before His Majesty King Hussein. The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's Political Advisor Marwan Al Qasem, the King's Military Secretary Prince Talal Ben Mohammad and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan (Petra photo)



HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Hmeidi Al Fayed appointed King's military advisor

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree Monday was issued appointing Major General Hmeidi Al Fayed as military advisor and chief military escort to His Majesty King Hussein effective March 29. Maj. Gen. Al Fayed assumed senior leading positions in the armed forces, including commander of the Royal Guard and commander of Al Hussein Ben Ali Brigade.

Kaabneh awards religious contest winners

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Mirai Al Kaabneh Monday attended a celebration held to honour winners in religious competitions. Geo. Kaabneh presented awards to the first few winners. The celebration was attended by Geo. Kaabneh's assistants and senior army officers.

WHAT'S GOING ON

T.V.5 EUROPE PROGRAMME

★ A variety programme in French entitled "Thalasse" transmitted by T.V. 5 Europe at the French Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

THE FIRST QUARTET FESTIVAL

★ The Japanese "Kubo Quartet" at the main theatre at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILMS

★ Jordanian film entitled "The Shoe" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 7:30 p.m.

DRAMA

★ Comedy in Arabic entitled "The Guarantee" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of Zaloum foodstuff products at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ The Second International Stationery Exhibition at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road (Tel. 847113).

★ Book exhibition at Amman University.

★ Exhibition by Egyptian artist Shalabiya Ibrahim at Baladina Art Gallery (Tel. 678589).

★ Exhibition of spring paintings by Dr. Ali Al Ghoul at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

★ "Spring Exhibition 1994" at the Jordan Plastic Art Association Gallery (Tel. 699914).

★ Exhibition by artist Perween Al Sarraf at

Abu'd Art Gallery (10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 819861).

★ Exhibition by Iraqi artists Hayfa Habeeb and Farouk Hassan at Alia Art Gallery (10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.).

★ Exhibition entitled "Return to Nature" at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ "The Amman-Baghdad exhibition" by Artist Ahmad Al Shukalli at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Ceramics exhibition by artist Isam Nseirat at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of Jordanian herbs at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Flower exhibition entitled "The Flower Bridge Between Jordan and Palestine" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman (10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) (Tel. 679166).

★ Computer exhibition at the Amman International Auto Exhibition.

★ Art exhibition by artist Ahmed Nawar at Balka' Art Gallery in Fuheis (daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 729902).

★ Jordanian-Iraqi contemporary exhibition by over 80 artists at Alia Art Gallery in Wadi Sagra (9:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 644451).

LECTURE

★ Lecture entitled "Water Shortage as a Challenge to the Development of Jordan" by Manuel Schiffer, researcher and economist at the German Development Institute in Berlin, at the Goethe-Institut at 6:30 p.m.

DIALOGUE

★ Dialogue with Mr. Mu'nis Al Razzaz, head of the Jordan Writers Association, at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture at 7:00 p.m.

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Acid test of sanctions

CONTRARY TO some interpretations that try to portray Jordan's linking of its resumption of the peace talks to ending the siege against Aqaba as political posturing, the Kingdom will prove that it means business when it comes to vital national interests. An upcoming multilateral meeting in the Hague on the environment will not be boycotted. Instead Jordan will be sending a junior diplomat to the meeting in a gesture that is meant to send a double message to the international community: The Kingdom is committed to the peace process; yet it will not accept to be taken for granted when a national interest is at stake. Jordan will thus attend the meeting to prove that we will go all the way to advance the cause of peace in the region. But by doing so, at a minimum level of representation, we intend to drive the point home that unless our legitimate rights and concerns are properly addressed, we will have to do what is necessary in the future to protect this country and its people.

All through its history, Jordan has demonstrated its genuine interest in bringing about a just and lasting peace to the region. In the words of many American officials, Jordan has been an oasis of moderation in the area. The Kingdom never played the spoiler game. It is not about to start that now. The warning that the unfair and unjustifiable siege against Aqaba should end was a call prompted by the country's real need to have that done right away.

For years, the Kingdom has been applying quiet diplomacy to have its concerns dealt with. But little attention did the decision-makers in Washington and the United Nations give to the country's requests, it seems. When Jordan exhausted all possible channels without receiving a positive answer, it resorted to the only option left to it: Let the whole world know that it is no longer willing to have its rights violated at a time when it is meeting all its obligations under international law and norms.

The United States, which repeatedly said it "understood" Jordan's concern, was supposed last week to discuss means of enforcing the sanctions against Iraq without continuing to hurt the Kingdom. Yet that did not happen, apparently because the various U.S. government organs needed more time to study the matter, but more likely because the Clinton administration did not want to appear as bowing to pressure from a small country like ours.

The U.S. would be wrong to think Jordan is merely playing a political game over the issue of sanctions and their implications on our economy. We do not need to make political capital this way. Jordan wants a speedy solution and has gone out of its way to prove its goodwill, by sending a delegate to the Hague's meeting. Washington should reciprocate. No body doubts the ability of the U.S. to find a suitable way of enforcing the sanctions against Iraq without hurting Jordan if it wanted to. Otherwise, Jordan has at least to be compensated for all the economic losses sustained as a result of those sanctions. After all, the way the international community chooses to deal with this problem will be an important indication of what it might do to bring about real peace in the region. If it is going to be an imposed, shaky peace, Jordan might not need it anyway.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Monday came out in support of a proposal made by Faisal Husseini, a senior Palestinian official who called for the formation of a standing committee to supervise the ongoing coordination between the Palestinians and the Jordanians. This committee would serve better than the seasonal meetings by the two sides and can yield better results, said the daily. Husseini has reaffirmed a fact that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination was inevitable for safeguarding the interests of both sides. This is of utmost importance as neither side would like to see Israel dealing with Arab parties separately and achieve its objectives at the expense of Arab national interest, added the paper. The current stage is crucial and the challenges are serious and the two sides should join hands to confront Israel's plots.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily said Monday that the stationing of civilian observers in Hebron can do nothing to prevent the settlers from attacking the Palestinian civilians. Yousef Mahmoud said that the deployment of unarmed observers from Europe can by no means shield the Palestinians against attacks like that which occurred at the Ibrahim Mosque in February. Criticising the United Nations for failing to implement Resolution 904 which calls for the deployment of U.N. peacekeeping troops, the writer said that no one can prevent another Jewish settler from opening fire on the local inhabitants if he chooses to do so at any time. In its attempt to cover up for its crime at the mosque and to make the world forget about the atrocity, Israel has now allowed Palestinian police to be deployed there, said the writer, but that police force would not be able to resist the omnipresence of the Israeli forces in the occupied territories and would not end the Jewish settlers presence there. In addition, said the writer, Israel has not disarmed the settler and will do nothing to dismantle any of the settlements that have been set up on Arab-owned land.

The View from Fourth Circle

April 1994: the real historic moment

THE PREVALENT, often smug, view that dominates the intelligentsia in the United States and other parts of the West is that the end of the cold war in 1990 also effectively marked the end of the 20th century, in terms of global ideology and political history. Many of us around the world sort of went along with that view for a few years after 1990, not because we accepted it, but because there seemed to be no other better analysis of what was happening in global historical terms.

I would suggest, however, that 1990 was not the end of the 20th century, but rather this month, April 1994, for two symbolic reasons: the non-racial elections that will be held in South Africa at the end of the month, and the initial implementation stage of the peace accord that will see Israel start to withdraw from parts of the occupied West Bank and Gaza. These acts, I would suggest, encompass a far more widespread and deeper global historical transformation than the end of the cold war.

The American perception of totalitarian Communism as the leading evil of this epoch is understandable, in view of the direct confrontation that emerged between Soviet-led Communism and American-led capitalism in the 1950s, and that endured and engulfed much of the rest of the world in the second half of this century. Totalitarian and authoritarian Marxist-Communism, as we now see in retrospect, will probably be recorded in history as a relatively brief experiment that was blown out of proportion because it challenged and often threatened the American-dominated ideological, commercial and intellectual discourse of the past several decades.

A more sober and thorough analysis of the Communist-capitalist confrontation, however, suggests to me and to many others around the world major geographical and chronological flaws in the American perception of contemporary history. First, the very ethno-centric American view sees history primarily through the prism of American civilisation, without adequately considering the status of billions of people in other parts of the world, especially in the developing countries of the South. Second, this is a very partial historical assessment that starts and ends with modern American history, without adequately taking into consideration the longer span of human history against which a more honest and complete historical assessment should be undertaken.

The non-racial elections in South Africa and the beginning of the end of Zionist domination in Palestine, on the other hand, are much more important symbols of two global phenomena — anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism — whose historical span and geographical impact are far greater than the Communist-capitalist face-off of the second half of this century.

Apartheid in South Africa and Zionism in Palestine are two ideologies whose roots are deeply entrenched in the predominantly West European imperial and colonial adventures of the 18th and 19th centuries. Palestine and South Africa effectively comprise the world's last two colonial liberation movements; it is appropriate, and rather neat, that they should mark significant turning points during this same month in 1994. This is especially apt in Palestine, in view of the fact that the Zionist movement was launched in Europe in 1894 — exactly a century ago.

The broader struggle that is underway now in the world is not about physical liberation from colonial occupation, because most colonised lands have been freed. The struggle that

we see crystallising today around the world is against a predatory brand of cultural and ideological arrogance that emanates primarily from the United States. It is interesting to see this struggle in its many contemporary forms: the French struggle against cultural domination by the American film and media industry; the Chinese and others in East Asia firmly stand up to American notions of human rights; the Japanese try to hold their ground against American commercial market dictates; the Indians, Pakistanis and North Koreans refuse to bow down to American views of who should and should not develop domestic nuclear and ballistic missile industries; Singapore refuses to knuckle under American objections to application of Singapore's punitive civil law to an American young man whose sentence was caning for vandalism; China, Saudi Arabia and other countries apply stricter regulations about who can own satellite dishes in their countries; many lands turn to their communal ethnic, tribal and religious identity as an alternative to the Western concept of individual rights exercised within structures of civil society; and, in perhaps the most challenging phenomenon to deal with, without electing hysterical charges of inhuman anti-Semitism, we see communities around the world reacting with mixed emotions to the screening of the award-winning film *Schindler's List*, which revives, once again, the horrors of the Holocaust.

"The world is not saying that America is bad and American ways are repugnant. We are saying that the United States has to be more sensitive to the cultural norms and political sentiments of other peoples, and more realistic about its capacity to export political and moral values along with its successful export of material goods."

These are not isolated incidents: They are individual strands of a wider emotional and political tapestry of sensitivities around the world that reject a wholesale conversion to American political and cultural values. The picture is not all black and white, because most cultures also happily adopt many American and Western products, systems and values. The world is not saying that America is bad and American ways are repugnant. We are saying that the United States has to be more sensitive to the cultural norms and political sentiments of other peoples, and more realistic about its capacity to export political and moral values along with its successful export of material goods.

The most interesting and difficult of the phenomena I mentioned above is the reaction to the film *Schindler's List*. I have not seen the film, but it seems to me that the global reaction to it reflects a wider irritation with the American insistence on exporting Holocaust ideology to the rest of the world. There is no denying the reality, the horrors, the suffering and the moral calamity of the Holocaust against the Jews. Those who deny these are callous and cruel to the point of inhumanity.

What does the objection to the film mean, however, in the context of the global, longer historical trend I mentioned at the start? I think it means that people around the world are no longer afraid of speaking their minds in the face of any American insistence on moulding global culture on the basis of the American experience, for the Holocaust remains a central pillar of Western, especially American, political culture and guilty. The message from much of the rest of the world is that, yes, the enormity of the moral calamity and the human tragedy of the Holocaust are recognised and cannot be forgotten; but all the historical and global terms the suffering of the Jews in mid-century Europe cannot perpetually be projected as the defining moral and political act of all peoples, in all lands, for all time.

Holocaust ideology was pivotal to the creation of the state of Israel and the 20th century's post-colonial occupation of Palestine; and for many decades the United States projected Israel as both a homeland for the Jews and a bastion of Western democratic values in a strategic, oil-rich region that was threatened by Communism. Israel, like the Communist-capitalist battle, has been assessed in the American political psyche within the narrow perspective of 20th century American experiencing and national interest — without adequately appreciating the impact of the state of Israel on Palestinians and other Arabs.

It is noteworthy that many around the world are now stating openly that the repeated projection of the Holocaust is not necessarily inappropriate, but perhaps somehow incomplete. Like the American worldview of Communism and the end of the cold war, it is historically and geographically truncated. We now hear calls for a parallel appreciation of the mass suffering and genocidal anguish of others, in other parts of the world, in other periods of history — such as the catastrophe of the slave trade for Africans in the 17th-19th century, the suffering of American blacks during the centuries of slavery, the national anguish of Armenians and Kurds, the century-long agony of the Palestinians and the horrendous impact of European imperial conquest on indigenous peoples in North and South America in the last half a millennium.

The intellectually honest and historically truthful thing to do is not to deny the Holocaust, but to see it as one of the most appalling of many national catastrophes that have plagued human civilisation during the last 500 years of the imperial era. Unlike the Holocaust, these other national catastrophes did not necessarily a willful, deliberate plan to exterminate an entire race or ethnic group. But like the Holocaust, they did result in mass, sustained suffering, dislocation, denial and death for tens of millions of people. They also fall into the category of the consequences of Western colonial and imperial arrogance and racism writ on a global scale, within a time frame measured in half a millennium, rather than half a century.

This, not just the demise of the Communist footnote, is the real historical era that is drawing to a close now; these are some of the people who look forward to a new world order that is rid of the psyche of racist colonial and imperial domination. This is the more comprehensive and honest view of global history that we and others would like the world to grasp at this moment of transformation and hope around the world.

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Clinton in a bind over Greece and Macedonia

By Alan Elsner
Renter

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton, anxious to put the war in former Yugoslavia well behind him, now finds himself in the middle of an increasingly dangerous standoff between Greece and Macedonia.

Complicating the situation from Mr. Clinton's viewpoint is the role of the influential Greek-American community, whose leaders have thrown their weight firmly behind Athens and are pressuring the president to do the same.

"The situation in Macedonia is becoming quite worrisome. It is potentially one of the least stable places in the region and its stability is coming under increasing pressure," said Robert Haydon, a scholar at Pittsburgh University.

"Macedonia is in the classic position of a buffer state. None of the surrounding countries can allow anybody else to control it," he said.

Macedonia is strategically important because any spread of the Yugoslav conflict to within its boundaries would likely draw in other parties, notably Greece, Albania and Bulgaria.

The clash between Greece and Macedonia centres on the name of the former Yugoslav republic and some of its national symbols, which Greece says belong to the Greek nation. Greece objects to Macedonia calling itself Macedonia, saying that title must be reserved for its own northern province.

For a long time, Greece managed to delay international recognition of Macedonia. But if found itself isolated when the other 11 members of the European Union (EU) recognised the republic under the name, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, "followed six weeks ago by Washington.

Greece reacted to the U.S. decision by clamping a blockade on Macedonia barring it from using the port of Saloni-ka, through which 80 per cent of its trade usually passes.

With the Greek public whipped into a fury, an estimated million people paraded down the streets of Saloni-ka last week, backing their government's hard line.

The United States would like to resolve the dispute before the moderate Macedonian

Italy's moment of truth

Voters opt for a force to fill a vacuum in show of disenchantment with the old ways

By Daniel J. Wakin
The Associated Press

ROME — When a leader in Italy's victorious conservative coalition said Benito Mussolini was the "greatest statesman of the century," he wasn't saying anything he hadn't said before.

And it didn't mean Italians had decided suddenly to bring back a fascist dictatorship by supporting the coalition, which won last week's parliamentary elections.

But it drove home some truths about Italian politics after the fall of the centrist parties that ran the country since the end of World War II.

In their absence, Italians showed their deep-rooted conservative nature by voting for a rightist coalition, even one that included Fascism's descendants, over a left dominated by the former Communists.

"Young people voted for (the right) because there was something new there... The left stayed with its rituals. It did not leave the past," leftist commentator Vittorio Foa said in an interview published Saturday in *La Stampa*.

"The left stayed with its rituals. It did not leave the past," Mr. Foa told the *Turin* daily.

...millionaire who controls a television, insurance and retail empire and Italy's most successful soccer team.

Skilfully using public relations, American-style campaigning and television, Mr. Berlusconi promised 1 million new jobs, an unfettered free market, privatisation and the magic phrase: tax cuts.

But he knew from the beginning that he needed to

elect Gianfranco Fini, who currently is chosen by parliament.

On Friday, Mr. Fini was quoted in an interview as saying dictator Mussolini was the century's "greatest statesman," but denied his party had links to Fascist ideology of the Mussolini era. His party, which favours the death penalty, tough immigration laws and attracts neo-Nazi skinhead supporters, is "post-Fascist," he said.

He and Mr. Bossi, despite the Easter pause Saturday, con-

tinued their bickering. Mr. Bossi repeated he may not bring the league into a government, and again ruled out Mr. Berlusconi as premier. Mr. Bossi is pushing for a federal system, which Mr. Fini opposes.

"Maybe Bossi will understand that he did not win the elections on his own," Mr. Fini said. The National Alliance leader is pushing for a directly elected president, who currently is chosen by parliament.

On Sunday

day

Mr.

King reaffirms support

(Continued from page 1)

the whole Arab Nation and for the sake of ensuring a better and more dignified future for the coming generations.

"Words fail me in expressing my feelings in solidarity with the Palestinians in view of the Hebron massacre and the continued suffering of the people of Hebron and other parts of the occupied lands," King Hussein said.

"We pray to God to see the day when every Arab would recognise the magnitude of sacrifice offered by the steadfast people in the occupied lands."

"We pledge to pursue all possible efforts to help alleviate your sufferings and provide whatever assistance you need," the King said.

The president of the Khalil Al Rahim Society in Amman representing the people of Hebron in Jordan, Waheed Ja'abari, delivered

an address voicing Hebrews' deep gratitude to the King and the Jordanian government and people for their help to the victims of the Hebron massacre.

Jordan had set up a national committee to raise funds for the victims of the mosque attack and has been hosting the injured in Jordanian hospitals for treatment.

Leading members of the Hebron delegation also delivered addresses in which they outlined the peoples' sufferings under occupation and referring to the arbitrary measures adopted by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinian people.

Later Mr. Ja'abari announced that King Hussein had offered to personally finance the cost of treating the wounded from the massacre not only in Jordan, but also abroad.

Mr. Ja'abari voiced the gratitude of the Hebron families for the King's offer.

Israel vetoes Arafat aides

(Continued from page 1)

qbouli and Marwan Barghouti as well as FIDA member Jamal Zakout.

Most of the 43 expellees are affiliated with Fatah.

Dr. Aroui, a prominent member of PLO reformists led by former chief peace negotiator Haidar Abdol Shafi, plans to resume his political activities upon his return home.

Upon his return to his hometown of Ramallah, Mr. Aroui said, "I will take up my duties in civic and political society. We have a lot of work to do."

A former professor at Bir Zeit University, Dr. Aroui hopes to take his post again at the most prominent institute of higher education in the occupied territories which was closed for years for educating young Palestinians on theories of nationalism and political freedoms, known as "incitement against the state" in Israeli parlance.

Dr. Aroui is one of five deportees taking his family of four home on Tuesday. "The children are taking a few days.

Blaze at Amman hotel

(Continued from page 1)

dow and injured himself could not be immediately confirmed.

"As of this evening we have 40 guests who chose to stay with us," Mr. Kanaan said. "We are continuing clean-up and hope to be back in business in three days." No estimate of damages was immediately available.

The injured were six Britons, two Italians, three Iraqis and one Jordanian.

Dr. Adwan, the tourism minister, told the Jordan Times: "The fire would have been catastrophic had the hotel not used fire-retardant mate-

rial in construction and furnishings.

"As a rule, the concerned authorities ensure that such materials are used in hotels. All other similar hotels in Jordan have such preventive measures against fire."

It was the second fire at a major Amman hotel in two years. In March 1992, a faulty electric circuit caused a fire at the Inter-Continental Hotel, killing an Iraqi businessman who was caught in a stalled elevator.

In December 1994, a blaze at the Safeway Department Store, also blamed on a faulty circuit, injured more than 300 people.

Unmatching bullet found in mosque

(Continued from page 1)

were "concentrations of blood found at specific spots."

"The amount of blood on the rugs wasn't so great considering the type of attack," Mr. Segal replied. He said this was probably because worshippers were warmly dressed, "so blood was absorbed by their

clothing."

Both Mr. Nadiwi and Mr. Segal appeared to rule out claims by Arab witnesses that a grenade was thrown during the shooting.

Israel Radio said two Palestinian hospital directors were to testify after a recess Monday. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was scheduled to testify on Wednesday.

Oman says Yemen talks failed

(Continued from page 1)

added.

The minister said Oman hoped the Yemeni rivals would now resolve the political crisis "at their own initiative" and that they would settle their differences in order to maintain Yemeni unity.

Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh, who left Oman separately on Monday, were the former leaders of North and South Yemen respectively before the two merged in 1990.

They have been locked in a paralysing feud for eight months, over the balance of power in the United States between its conservative and tribe-dominated north and the largely secular, formerly Marxist south.

The two men signed a reconciliation accord in Amman in February which was supposed to end the quarrel by bringing in political and economic reforms.

But there has been intermittent fighting between rival army units since then, and Yemen's northern and southern political parties have continued to trade insults and accuse each other of wanting to split the

country in two again.

Political sources in Sanaa said the Omanis were already frustrated with Yemeni army units, which agree to move out of areas where they are confronting rival troops only to move back again when the committee has gone.

Sources in the vice-president's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) said in Aden that Mr. Saleh stormed out of the talks at Salalah, the remote resort of Sultan Qaboos, threatening to use force to bring to heel leaders who continue to defy him.

This could not be confirmed with Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) or by independent sources, but diplomats in Sanaa and officials in neighbouring Arab states said they feared a military confrontation which neither side could easily win.

Diplomats said the United States and other Western and regional powers fear Yemen could follow the pattern of civil war in Somalia, just across the Red Sea, where rival warlords control the devastated countryside.

At the moment a mixture of

Major-General Amnon Shashak, Israel's deputy chief of staff and Mr. Shashak's usual negotiating partner, also joined the talks.

Dr. Shashak said on Sunday that the negotiators needed Gen. Shahak to be present to deal with some of the points under discussion.

Dr. Shashak said three prominent lawyers from the West Bank and two from the Gaza Strip were also arriving on Monday to take part in negotiations on legal aspects.

The PLO and Israeli teams need to decide what laws will apply in the occupied territories in the transitional period leading to an agreement on their final status.

At the moment a mixture of

Israeli, British and Ottoman laws are in force, alongside some Egyptian laws in the Gaza Strip and some Jordanian laws in the West Bank.

"Six committees will be meeting day and night to reach agreement. There will be achievements every day on the way to reaching final agreement," Dr. Shashak added.

On Sunday he said there were no longer any serious sticking points and the negotiators should be able to sort out all the details of Israeli withdrawal and Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho within two weeks.

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Bank of Jordan reports brisk work in Ramallah

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Hundreds of customers line up at the Bank of Jordan, the Kingdom's second-largest bank, when it reopened its first branch in the occupied West Bank Monday.

The office in Ramallah is the first of nine branches the bank plans to open throughout the occupied territories as part of the peace agreements to give Palestinians autonomy.

Ishai Akari, the bank's director, said that business in the first day in the occupied West Bank town of Ramallah was surprising and unexpected. "It is very encouraging for the first day, we never expected such a crowd," Mr. Akari told the Associated Press.

He said that at least 250 new accounts were opened in his bank on Monday, handled by about 45 employees.

Last month the Bank of Israel issued a permit to the Bank of Jordan to open a branch in Ramallah.

Mr. Akari said eight other Bank of Jordan branches will open in major West Bank cities in the next two months, and will also open banks in Jericho and the Gaza Strip. Palestinians are expected to start assuming control of the areas this month.

Eight Jordanian banks oper-

ated 31 branches in the West Bank and Gaza Strip until the lands were seized by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war.

One bank, the Cairo-Amman Bank, was allowed to reopen in 1986 under a special arrangement that gave Israel control over the bank's operations.

The restrictions kept other Jordanian banks from reopening.

Following progress in the peace talks between Israeli and Jordan, both sides signed an agreement of understanding that included Israeli approval of reopening of all closed Jordanian banks.

Mr. Akari told Reuters: "The bank started full operation today. The next step will be to open branches in Nablus, Jenin, Hebron — and this will take place within the coming three months.

"We will also open branches in Bethlehem, Gaza, Jericho and Qalqilia later on. We have not encountered any problems yet. Our operations got off to a normal start today."

Mohammad Ali Ibrahim, assistant manager of the Bank of Jordan, said in Amman on Sunday that the Ramallah branch would have full banking operations including transfers in dinar and foreign currencies, loans, and letters of credit.

Bargain hunting cuts Wall Street stock losses

NEW YORK (R) — Blue-chip stocks plunged Monday morning amid fears of higher interest rates, but managed to narrow their losses as bargain hunters bought up hard-hit issues.

The Dow Jones industrial average was off 34.83 points at 3,601.13 at 1 p.m. (1700 GMT), rebounding from an early loss of more than 83 points.

The New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) invoked its automatic limit on computer programme trading to slow the market's descent when the Dow lost more than 50 points in 10 minutes.

Despite the market's partial recovery, sentiment remained overwhelmingly negative, with 2,000 issues down and less than 300 up. Trading volume was heavy at more than 194 million shares on the NYSE.

The Dow set a record high close on Jan. 31 of 3,978.36. It has been backtracking under pressure as reports pointed to a stronger-than-expected U.S. economy.

The latest setback was triggered by Friday's report that non-farm payrolls in March rose by an unexpectedly brisk 456,000, nearly double the 234,000 rise forecast by economists. The jobless rate held

steady at 6.5 per cent, as expected. Monthly personal income and spending were also reported with unexpectedly strong gains.

Economists said given the economy's expansion, only 125,000 jobs can be added each month without fuelling inflation.

The reports fanned inflation fears and boosted the prospect that the Federal Reserve will tighten credit again to keep the economy from overheating. It has raised interest rates twice in two months to tighten credit.

The stock market was closed Friday for the Easter holiday. The bond market, which was open, was rocked by the job data, and the yield on the treasury's key 30-year bond shot up to its highest since January 1993 at 7.28 per cent.

The yield escalated anew Monday, rising to 7.30 per cent.

The rapid rise of the long bond yield is disconcerting and damaging the equity markets, so at the moment all is confusion," said Alan Ackerman, analyst at Reich Co.

Investors have been selling stocks, fearing that the higher cost of borrowing money could stifle the economy.

Phil Orlando, equity portfolio manager at First Capital Advisers, said the 3,550 level for the Dow was a key support that should hold, and that the market could see a bounce.

"The equities, in order to catch up with Friday's collapse in the bond market, had to sell off to about the 3,550 level and that happened in about the first hour," Mr. Orlando said.

"My best guess is that we find support at 3,550 and see the market trend up from there," he said.

Economists speculated the

central bank might move to raise interest rates this week.

Gregory Nie, a market

analyst at Kemper Securities,

said while small hike would

further pressure an already

reeling stock market, a sharper

one could sow the seeds of a

rebound.

Traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange

"If they do a substantial move, then we would go down and rally quickly," he explained. "There would be a jolt on the news but then relief on the feeling that this may be all the medicine we have to take."

Mr. Orlando said bargain

hunters were focusing on economically sensitive cyclical, high technology and automobile issues.

Among stocks seeing some

bargain hunting was Caterpillar, up 1/4 to 113 1/2.

Among Dow components

stepping gingerly into positive

territory, Du Pont was up 1/4 at 53 1/4, Procter & Gamble rose 1/4 to 53 1/4 and McDonald's Corp. was up 2 1/2 at 57 1/2.

The NASDAQ index was down 14.31 points at 729.15 and the American Stock Exchange index lost 7.56 points at 435.55.

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Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



China says it can live without GATT membership

BEIJING (R) — China wants to join GATT but will not take membership at any price and can live without the world free trade body if necessary, an official newspaper has said.

"With or without access to GATT, China will emerge as a powerful global competitor," the China Daily quoted a senior official as saying.

The newspaper said Li Zhongzhong, deputy director general for international relations at the ministry of foreign trade and economic cooperation, ruled out accepting membership of the General Agree-

ment on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) at any cost.

"The bottom line is equal treatment," Mr. Li told the newspaper.

"China hopes to obtain unconditional most-favoured nation (MFN) treatment equivalent to that accorded to all other contracting parties by participating in GATT," Mr. Li said.

"It is important to point out that this is the fundamental international principle applied universally, not a privilege as claimed by certain political arguments," he pointed out.

The official newspaper criti-

cised the United States for its

objection to MFN for China.

Washington insists China makes progress on human rights before it will renew the low-tariff policy for Beijing individually with Beijing.

"The world trade com-

munity has a choice between

accepting China as an equal

trading partner by granting a

GATT membership, or con-

peting for access to the

Chinese market on a recipro-

cal basis," he stressed.

China's bid to join GATT

has been stalled by Western

objections, particularly from

the United States, that Beijing

has not yet made enough of a

transition from a socialist-style

planned economy to a

capitalist-style market system.

Turkish lira plummets ahead of austerity package

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish lira took a sharp downturn Monday, plunging 11.5 per cent to the dollar over expectations that economic austerity measures would push interest rates and relax the tight grip on the currency market.

The lira fell to 30.500 on the interbank, down from 27,000 Friday. Astronomic interest rates, which at one point hit 1,000 per cent, kept the dollar in tight control in the past two weeks.

"People bought the package expectation today, they may sell it tomorrow," said one banker, adding that he expected stability measures could even include a surprise devaluation of the lira.

Unconfirmed details of the economic stability package already hit newspaper headlines, according to which price rises in state-sector goods including petroleum will be up to 100 per cent and value added tax rates will be increased.

The government is also expected to cut jobs, restrict wage rises, freeze investments and swiftly privatise state firms.

The central bank may also widen banks' reserve requirements to help the frail lira regain its credibility.

Some bankers said the dollar, which jumped 105 per cent against the lira since Jan. 1, was overvalued. "There is nothing concrete to justify this rise," said one fund manager.

"The stability measures will lead us towards stagflation. The dollar's rise has to slow down after the package is disclosed," said the same banker who asked not to be named.

Also helping the dollar was the central bank's apparent absence in the currency market for the first time in two months.

Uncertainties about the dollar's future trend kept its spot price in the bazaar currency market below the interbank levels. By midday, it was trading at the 28,000-29,000 lira range.

"There are uncertainties, people prefer to wait," said one.

İstanbul Stock Exchange index raced 8.84 per cent up to

end at 16,356.48, as investors rushed to buy shares on the prediction that Mrs. Ciller's measures would calm the money markets.

"Prices are very cheap for buying," said Kerem Korur, assistant general manager at Hafiz broker. The market had lost 48 per cent in the period between Jan. 13 and April 1.

News of the annual consumer price inflation jumped to a 23-month-high in March at 73.6 per cent had hardly any impact. Monthly price rise was 5.2 per cent, down from six in February.

Bond yields shrank in thin volume and traders said investors were keen on completing deals before interest rates are trimmed.

But one banker said he expected short-term rates to remain high for some time, although those on the longer-end could fall.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY APRIL 5, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The triple sextile to Neptune, Sun and Mars offers a special opportunity to bring your special capabilities to the attention of higher-ups who can help you advance in career matters.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) An opportunity to advance presents itself early in the day to be alert. The path to greater success and happiness is open to you if taken.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You have much energy now so be sure to schedule your activities wisely. Associates are more willing to cooperate now.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be sure you know what your personal aims are before going after them. Come to a firm agreement with fellow associates you meet.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 21) You have some excellent ideas that should be discussed with influential persons who can help you put them across to those in charge.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can make good progress in a new project you have in mind if you apply yourself seriously. Don't neglect your health.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Put your talents to work that could give you more abundance in the future. Be active and be sure of what you are doing to those in authority.

VECTORS: (Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces)

future, so don't waste time putting them in operation for your utmost success.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Engage in outside interests that could give you more abundance in the days ahead. Strive for increased happiness from your loved ones.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are able to solve a problem that has been a puzzle to you in the past. Plan how to have more accord with associates you are involved with.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You have much energy now so be sure to schedule your activities wisely. Associates are more willing to cooperate now.

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World News

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 1994

Kozyrev:
Policy
changes
are due
to elections

MOSCOW (AP) — Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev says the recent hardening of Russia's foreign policy is a response to the victory of hardliners in December's parliamentary elections.

Explaining the policy shift in a TV interview Sunday night, Mr. Kozyrev said Russia needs to reassert itself as a global power, but stressed that his new line should not be viewed as anti-American.

"If the extreme nationalist opposition accuses me of being pro-American, it means we're pursuing the right policy towards the United States. The opposition wants to build relationships with the United States and NATO on an enemy basis," he told the new independent television network.

Since extreme nationalists and Communists won about 40 per cent of the national vote in the Dec. 12 elections, Moscow has adopted a more assertive foreign policy and has been less inclined to follow Washington's lead in international matters.

This was especially evident with Mr. Kozyrev, who has long been viewed as a pro-Western, reformist politician and was a favourite target for hardliners' attacks and resignation demands.

Mr. Kozyrev's new tough talk included a January speech pledging to defend the rights of ethnic Russians across the former Soviet Union.

In a statement carried by the official news agency ITAR-TASS earlier this year, Mr. Kozyrev also said Russian troops must remain in former Soviet republics to avoid a "security vacuum" in regions of "vital interest to Russia." The Foreign Ministry later claimed the statement was distorted.

Under Kozyrev's guidance, Russia has played an independent peacemaking role in the former Yugoslavia, and now wants the United Nations to recognise some of its peacekeepers in restive ex-Soviet republics as U.N. troops.

The foreign policy changes seem designed to pacify the hardliners, many of whom view President Boris Yeltsin as a Western puppet, mourn the loss of the Soviet Union and want to rebuild some form of Russian empire.

Mr. Kozyrev said in the TV interview that the new foreign agenda was not a result of pressure by nationalists and other hardliners, yet he acknowledged that the elections had much to do with it.

"We would have been had democrats and I would no longer respect myself if I did not heed the opinion of the voters, the voice of the people that was expressed in recent elections," he said.

Mr. Kozyrev said some Western critics do not want Moscow to play a major role in international affairs.

"If I'm criticised by those who clearly dislike Russia's independent role as a global power — and there are such people in the West — I see it as a good sign," he said. "This means that we are doing everything correctly."

Zhirinovsky's past questioned

Meanwhile, public records show that Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the Russian nationalist leader who campaigns on antisemitic themes, had a Jewish last name until age 18.

Mr. Zhirinovsky vehemently denies that he or his parents were Jewish. Mr. Zhirinovsky's origins have political significance in Russia because of his attacks on Jews, and the documents raise questions about his candor.

The public records were found by a reporter working for the Associated Press and Cable News Network in four archives in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, the city where Mr. Zhirinovsky was born and raised.

Mr. Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party won 23.5 per cent of the national vote in December's parliamentary elections, and he has said he will run for Russia's presidency in 1996. Much of his political strength rests on extreme nationalists who are virulently anti-Semitic.

Although the records do not say specifically who his father was, Mr. Zhirinovsky's surname was listed on his birth registration as Eidelstein. Documents show he applied for and received permission to change his name from Eidelstein to Zhirinovsky in June 1964.

U.S. believes N. Korea has 2 nuclear bombs

WASHINGTON (Agencies)

— The United States thinks North Korea may have already built two nuclear weapons and is developing a programme that could produce a dozen a year, Defence Secretary William Perry said Sunday.

Speaking on the NBC programme *Meet The Press*, Mr. Perry said the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimates that North Korea may have one, possibly two, nuclear bombs.

"They are embarked on a programme of development which could get them a dozen or more bombs a year," he added.

Mr. Perry said the United States could knock out North Korea's nuclear weapons facilities but has rejected that option because it might provoke a war.

The United States did not expect to resolve its dispute with North Korea in a matter of a week or two and was prepared to be patient, he said.

But "if that (stalemate) is the case six months from now, I believe we would be out of the diplomatic mode and applying pressure," he said.

Mr. Perry said U.S. concern about North Korea's weapons programme included fears that it might sell them in the Middle East where it markets weapons, including short-range missiles, and that it is in the early stages of developing longer-range missiles that could strike targets in Japan and elsewhere.

NBC News reported Sunday that North Korea plans within two years to build a third plutonium reprocessing line some 25 times as large as the facilities it now has. Plutonium is a key ingredient of nuclear bombs.

Meanwhile, Vice Foreign Minister Hong Soon-Yong said Sunday the South Korean government should consider dropping its demand for an envoy exchange with North Korea as a major concession towards breaking the Korean nuclear deadlock.

The envoy exchange, along with full U.N. inspections of

and-a-half or two bombs. It is whether they will stop the nuclear programme that they have under way."

"Our first objective is to freeze the programme where it is now," he said. "Then we can be concerned with rolling that back."

The Washington Post reported Saturday that North Korea is in the process of doubling its plutonium capacity and has forged ahead with related nuclear reactor programmes.

The most worrisome construction has taken place in a reprocessing facility in Yongbyon which the United States has long contended should be dismantled, according to the Post.

A South Korean official said Monday his government disagrees with the CIA report that North Korea already developed at least one atomic bomb.

"There is no unanimous opinion on it even in the United States," Assistant Foreign Minister Choi Dong-jin said in a monthly news briefing for foreign reporters.

"No one seems to have clear evidence that North Korea has developed nuclear weapons or not," he said.

At a New Year's news conference early this year, South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said he had reliable intelligence reports that North Korea did not have an atomic bomb. He refused to elaborate.

According to KCNA, monitored in Tokyo, the spokesman said the statement was part of a U.S. policy of trying to stifle North Korea's Communist system but this was bound to fail.

The United States is leading international efforts to determine whether North Korea is secretly developing nuclear weapons in contravention of its commitments under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

North Korea's nuclear facilities, has been a precondition for high-level U.S.-North Korea talks on improving relations and resolving nuclear disputes.

Shelving the envoy exchange could enable the international community to pressure North Korea more effectively to accept inspections, Mr. Hong said.

If Seoul makes the concession, North Korea may feel more obligated to comply with the U.N. resolution on nuclear inspections, he added.

The presidential office declined to comment. But Mr. Hong indicated his government may call a meeting of high-level security officials this week to explore a new strategy on the nuclear dispute.

Mr. Hong also said low-level, unofficial contact is under way between the United States and North Korea on how to break the impasse. He did not elaborate.

North Korea accused the U.N. Security Council Monday of playing into U.S. hands by pressuring Pyongyang to allow unhampered international inspection of its nuclear facilities.

A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman told the official Central News Agency (KCNA) that last Thursday's Security Council statement was unreasonable and made no sense.

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The envoy exchange, along with full U.N. inspections of

U.N. says Serbs block observers from Gorazde

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations said Monday Bosnian Serbs had refused it permission to send more military observers to the Muslim enclave of Gorazde, which has been under Serb attack for a week.

U.N. military spokesman Rob Annink said Serb artillery and tank fire hit the town and the front lines Sunday but the fighting appeared to have died down overall in the so-called U.N. "safe haven."

One civilian was killed and a soldier in the Muslim-led army and four civilians were wounded in Sunday's fighting. Mr. Annink told a new briefing in Sarajevo.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio said the Bosnian government army in Gorazde had repulsed two infantry attacks, one overnight and the second Monday morning.

Mr. Annink said the U.N. Protection Force had suspended its plan to send more military observers to reinforce the present overworked four-man team in Gorazde because the Serbs encircling the eastern Bosnian enclave had refused to allow them passage.

Mr. Annink said the Serbs had told UNPROFOR that they should delay their plans to send in the military observers because of "Muslim offensives and various combat activities" in eastern Bosnia, including Gorazde.

"So it's off for the moment," Mr. Annink said. "Apari from the military

observers, the international presence in Gorazde, where 65,000 people are trapped, is limited to a handful of aid workers.

Meanwhile, the police chief in the Bosnian Serb town where up to 20 people have died in a wave of ethnic cleansing has assured the Muslims there they were safe. But many still want to leave, a U.N. official said Monday.

Kris Janowski, spokesman for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sarajevo, was briefing reporters on the situation in Prijedor, a Serb nationalist stronghold in northern Bosnia from where the U.N. is planning a mass evacuation of non-Serbs.

"We know that the local Muslim representative was approached by the local police chief who basically urged them not to go, saying they would receive guarantees of safety, that they would be safe and nothing would happen to them."

"But from what we know they are not quite convinced that this would be the case. The last time we spoke to them a lot of people said they would leave."

Mr. Janowski said there were no new reports of violence against Muslims and Croats in Prijedor and other parts of Serb-held northern Bosnia.

"The situation is apparently calm. There are more police on the street now," Mr. Janowski said.

Britain, Ireland close ears to Sinn Fein plea

DUBLIN (R) — Peace moves in Northern Ireland were stuck in a new rut Monday after IRA allies failed to convince Britain or Ireland they should treat its three-day truce as a key to end the conflict.

Both governments responded tersely to leaders of Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Army's political wing, who said Sunday the ceasefire starting Wednesday was a crucial step forward.

"What is needed is not a three-day ceasefire, after which the killing would begin again, but a permanent end to violence," the British government replied in a statement.

"Sinn Fein should stop playing with people's emotions and deliver the end to violence that the people of Northern Ireland long for."

In a key Anglo-Irish initiative in December Britain offered outcast Sinn Fein leaders a place at talks on Northern

Ireland's future, but only after the IRA stopped fighting for three months and proved it would not resume guerrilla attacks.

Sinn Fein has not replied, saying it needs Britain to explain the plan to it in face-to-face talks before any end to the IRA's 25-year battle to end British rule in Northern Ireland, whose Protestant majority wants to stay British.

Sinn Fein leaders say an hour's meeting will do and urged British Prime Minister John Major at the weekend to seize the opportunity during the 72-hour truce, secretly if need be.

Sinn Fein head Gerry Adams and his number two Martin McGuinness stressed at weekend rallies that the truce's importance lay in its "potential" — an offer that Britain responded the ceasefire could be extended indefinitely, sources close to the IRA said.

Grachev confirms Russia to sign NATO deal

MOSCOW (R) — Defense Minister Pavel Grachev confirmed Monday that Russia planned to sign up for NATO's partnership for peace programme this month and denied suggestions of a split in the Kremlin on the issue.

He told ITAR-TASS news agency that he and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev had sent the appropriate documents to President Boris Yeltsin, who had given his verbal support to the proposal.

"We hope Andrei Kozyrev will sign a framework agreement in Brussels in April on Russia's joining the 'partnership for peace' programme," Gen. Grachev said.

"On the whole I do not see any disagreement in the government and presidential structures on this question."

"But from what we know they are not quite convinced that this would be the case. The last time we spoke to them a lot of people said they would leave."

Mr. Janowski said there were no new reports of violence against Muslims and Croats in Prijedor and other parts of Serb-held northern Bosnia.

"The situation is apparently calm. There are more police on the street now," Mr. Janowski said.

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Women watch the body of their friend Ethel Denise in the Durban township of Bambaweni who was allegedly shot by Inkatha Freedom Party supporters, while praying for peace at a wooden cross (AP photo)

S. Africa may delay vote in Natal

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Wracked by violence and under a state of emergency, voters in Natal province may have to wait a few weeks longer than the rest of the country to take part in South Africa's first all-race election.

Mr. Buthelezi said low-level, unofficial contact is under way between the United States and North Korea on how to break the impasse.

A South Korean official said Monday his government disagrees with the CIA report that North Korea already developed at least one atomic bomb.

"There is no unanimous opinion on it even in the United States," Assistant Foreign Minister Choi Dong-jin said in a monthly news briefing for foreign reporters.

"No one seems to have clear evidence that North Korea has developed nuclear weapons or not," he said.

At a New Year's news conference early this year, South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said he had reliable intelligence reports that North Korea did not have an atomic bomb. He refused to elaborate.

According to KCNA, monitored in Tokyo, the spokesman said the statement was part of a U.S. policy of trying to stifle North Korea's Communist system but this was bound to fail.

The United States is leading international efforts to determine whether North Korea is secretly developing nuclear weapons in contravention of its commitments under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

News reports Monday quoted unidentified government sources as saying a possible postponement of the vote in Natal — which includes the KwaZulu black homeland led by Mr. Buthelezi — would be considered.

A telephone poll of some 1,500 respondents at the weekend revealed that 68.4 per cent were dissatisfied with Mr. Buthelezi's account of why he borrowed 100 million yen (\$980,000) from Sagawa Kyuhi, a trucking firm at the centre of a 1992-93 pay-off scandal.

Only 14 per cent said they were satisfied with the prime minister's side of the story, while the remainder were undecided.

About 68 per cent said the prime minister should agree to a full probe of his affairs and allow his former political aide, Mr. Buthelezi, to stand trial.

Mr. Buthelezi has said that the 100 million yen (\$980,000) from Sagawa was a loan to renovate an ancestral estate and to purchase a Tokyo condominium. He said he repaid the money with interest by 1991 but has been unable to

produce receipts to prove his

The opposition maintains

the money was used as undeclared political donations to fund Mr. Buthelezi's successful bid for election as governor of KwaZulu, southern

Johannesburg, in 1983.

The LDP is also demanding

that a financial consultant

appear in parliament for questioning about a 1986 loan his

stock investment firm gave

Mr. Buthelezi under highly</p

Former boxing champ to visit Jordan

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — As the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) prepares to commence its 1994 season, two momentous activities are expected to surely keep fans busy and rousing throughout the upcoming months.

The visit to Jordan of former world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali in mid-April will be the first activity in which the JBF will cooperate with the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped (JSFH) and the Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the physically handicapped in organising a charity match between the Kingdom's top two teams Al Ahli and Al Orthodox.

Muhammad Ali, scheduled to arrive to Amman April 17 at the invitation of His Majesty King Hussein, will attend the charity match which will be held under Royal patronage at the Sports Palace April 22.

The legendary champion, who will be accompanied by family members, will also tour the Kingdom's archaeological and touristic sites. An auction of some of his belongings will also be held to benefit both charities.

The organising committee has set ticket prices at JD 3, and all proceeds will go to the JSFH and the Hussein Society.

The visit is sponsored by Royal Jordanian, the Amman Marriott Hotel and Ahmad Isa Murad Co.

The other basketball event in the country will be the Arab Radio and Television (ART) Championship, one of the biggest international basketball tournaments held in the country, bringing together a host of top Arab teams May 5-15.

Jordan Basketball Federation President Awwad Hadid, who heads the tournament's executive committee, said preparations were well on course for holding the tournament at the Sports Palace with a good number of teams from Arab countries, in addition to Jordan's Al Ahli and Al Orthodox.

"This tournament will very much enhance the relations between various Arab federations and clubs. It will also serve Jordanian basketball and give a big boost to organisers, referees, players and fans," Mr. Awwad told the Jordan Times Monday.

The tournament will be en-



Muhammad Ali

tirely sponsored by the Dabab Group for Communications who are overseeing the initiation of ART's broadcasting of their satellite sports channel from Amman in mid-June.

Muhammad Qadri Hassan, who is representing ART in the tournament's executive committee, told the Jordan Times that at least 10 teams had confirmed their participation: they are Al Ahli and Al Zamalek as well as Arab clubs' champions Al Jazireh from Egypt, Bahrain's Al Manamah, who are champions of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Lebanese league champions Al Riyadi and cup winners Al Hikma, Qatar's Al Arabi and Qatar clubs and Al Ahli of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Hassan added that Syria's Al Itihad and Al Wihda were also expected to participate, in addition to teams from Tunisia, Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

He also said that the championship, which is expected to cost ART over JD 100,000, would be seen all over the satellite channels and would also be covered on Jordan television.

During the tournament, Jordanian basketball superstar Murad Barakat, will officially retire from competitive basketball.

A special booklet is now being prepared for the occasion citing Barakat's long basketball career during which he represented Jordan in over 300 matches for the national as well as military teams and led Al Orthodox during their undisputed domination of the basketball scene throughout the eighties before losing it to all-time-rivals Al Ahli in 1990, 1992 and 1993.

Following the ART tournament, Barakat, who is now head coach of Al Orthodox, will travel to the U.S. for an advanced training course.

NBA

Drexler leads Blazers into playoffs

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (R) — Clyde Drexler scored 34 points, including three free throws in the final 28 seconds to lead the Portland Trail Blazers into the playoffs with a 109-105 victory over the New Jersey Nets on Sunday.

Rod Strickland added 18 points for Portland, which clinched a playoff berth by beating the Nets for the 15th time in 16 meetings.

Derrick Coleman had 29 points and Kenny Anderson added 25 and nine assists for the Nets, who have lost three of their last four games and dropped into the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference battle for post-season berths.

New Jersey erased a 10-point fourth-quarter deficit on Kenny Anderson's 22-foot jumper with 42 seconds left that tied the game at 102-102.

Drexler broke the deadlock and put the Blazers ahead to stay by hitting two free throws with 28 seconds remaining.

Consecutive turnovers by the Nets enabled Portland to open a 107-102 lead to another foul shot by Drexler and a layup by Strickland.

Magie Johnson was reminded that there's no place like home as his Los Angeles Lakers crushed the Atlanta Hawks 102-89 at the great Western Forum to raise the former superstar's record to 4-1 as coach of his old team.

The Lakers have won 11 of their last 15 overall and a season-high six in a row at home.

Eden Campbell scored 17 points to lead a balanced attack for the Lakers, who kept alive their playoff hopes. They trail eighth-place Denver

by 3 1/2 games in the Western Conference with 12 games remaining.

Los Angeles led 50-43 at halftime and used an 11-1 tear to open a 66-48 lead with 5:43 left in the third quarter. They never led by less than 11 points in the fourth quarter.

Also to Los Angeles, Hakeem Olajuwon poured in 39 points to lead the Houston Rockets to a 106-98 win over the Clippers.

Dominique Wilkins scored 36 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to pace the Clippers, who have dropped five straight games.

Houston broke an 18-18 deadlock with a 10-0 run to end the first and begin the second quarter.

A Robert Horry dunk gave the Rockets their largest lead of the game at 56-34 with 57 seconds left in the first half.

Olajuwon, who scored 22 points in the first half, shot 17-of-28 from the field and added 11 rebounds and six blocks.

Otis Thorpe had 17 points and nine rebounds and Kenny Smith collected 14 points and seven assists for the Rockets.

In Phoenix, Kevin Johnson had a monster of a game as he was responsible for 76 points in a 108-98 win for the Suns over the Denver Nuggets.

Johnson scored 42 points and dished out 17 assists to lead the Phoenix to their fifth straight win, while Denver suffered its third setback in a row.

Johnson, who had 29 points in the first half, finished just two points shy of his career-best performance.

The Suns held Denver to just nine points in the third

quarter — one more than the Nuggets' all-time low.

The Nuggets used a 13-0 fourth-quarter run to make it close, but Johnson hit a layup for a six-point Suns lead with 44.4 seconds left. Cedric Ceballos scored the final four points for Phoenix.

Pippen just missed a triple-double with 26 points, nine rebounds and nine assists. He scored 15 of his points in the second half as the Bulls won for the 10th time in 12 games.

The Pistons, who lost all five games to Chicago this season, had not been swept by a central division rival in 14 years.

A three-point jumper by Detroit's Terry Mills with three seconds left cut Chicago's lead to 94-93, but B.J. Armstrong nailed a pair of free throws to seal the win.

Armstrong and Horace Grant each scored 16 points, while Isiah Thomas led Detroit with 17 points.

In Philadelphia, Sherman Douglas scored 27 points and dished out a league season-high 22 assists as the Boston Celtics dealt the 76ers their franchise-record 11th straight home loss with a 135-112 thrashing.

Douglas led six Celtics to double figures with his season high in points and career best for assists.

Dino Radja scored 25 points and Kevin Gamble scored 17 of his 19 in the fourth quarter for Boston.

The woeful 76ers have dropped 10 in a row and 25 of their last 26 games.



during the African Nations Cup quarter-final match in Sousse, Tunisia (AFP photo)

Zambia realise dream but Ghana's hopes destroyed

ZOUSSSE, Tunisia (R) — Zambia's dream of a semifinal place at the African Nations Cup became reality on Sunday, but the hopes of Ghana Captain Abedi Pele were left in tatters.

Zambia, who said before the tournament their best hopes lay in reaching the semifinals, achieved that goal with a 1-0 win over Senegal in the Olympic stadium in Sousse.

But Zambia were stunned by an ailing Ivorian team who scored first in the 30th minute through Joel Tiehi, who had earlier missed a penalty.

Charles Akunnor revived Ghana's hopes by converting a long-range free-kick in the 77th minute but the Ivorians scored the winner just four minutes later through Abdoulaye Traore.

The match, watched by an enthusiastic crowd of locals and European holiday-makers in the seaside resort town, was

the best yet seen at the two-week tournament.

The Ivory Coast now play Nigeria in the first of the two semifinals in Tunis on Wednesday.

Earlier Zambia had secured their date with surprise package Mali in a scrappy match against Senegal.

Evans Sakala's 38th minute drive, another of the long-distance efforts that have characterised the tournament, was enough to ensure Zambia's progress.

Their youthful team has been built up in less than a year after the air disaster that killed 18 players last April.

Sampras hot favourite for Japan Open

TOKYO (R) — World number one Pete Sampras, fresh from victory at last week's Salem Open, becomes the favourite for the \$1.00 million Japan Open following the withdrawal of injured world number two Michael Stich.

The match featured the last person to beat Steffi Graf in Martinez, who defeated the German star in Philadelphia final last November, against the only player to take a set from Graf this year.

Top-seeded Sampras of the United States will take to the courts on Tuesday in search of his sixth title of the season and the 26th of his career.

The 22-year-old defending champion, who has a bye through to the second round, will also be looking to extend his winning streak of 16 straight matches.

Now that Stich is sidelined with a muscle injury, the main

obstacles in Sampras' path are second seed compatriot Michael Chang and third seed Becker of Germany.

But none of these has been playing his best of late. Chang, immensely popular in Japan, crashed out at the hands of Sweden's Henrik Holm in the quarterfinals of last week's Salem Open in Osaka.

Becker came to a more humiliating end, ousted in the first round by American Robbie Weiss, ranked 100 places below him.

Other seeds in action on Tuesday include veteran Ivan Lendl, a winner here 14 years ago, Aaron Krikstein, Brad Gilbert, all of the United

States, and Amos Mansdorf of Israel.

Seeds in action on Monday on the sun-drenched hardcourts at the Ariake Colosseum included 10th seed Patrick McEnroe of the United States and the 11th seeded Holm.

In the first round, Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden trounced Toshihisa Mori of Japan 6-1, 6-3, Robbie Weiss beat Maurice Ruah of Venezuela 6-4, 6-1 and qualifier Michael Tabbett of Australia outplayed Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands 6-4, 6-4.

Two seeds crashed out on the first day. Number 14 Jamie Morgan of Australia lost 3-6

in the fifth game of the first set and McEnroe broke back to the eighth.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♦A♦ QJ10♦ 9♦ 8♦ A♦ J10♦ 6♦ 5♦

What is your opening bid?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♦A♦ QJ10♦ 9♦ 8♦ A♦ J10♦ 6♦ 5♦

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1♦ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♦ Pass 1♦ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.3—East West vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦A♦ QJ10♦ 9♦ 8♦ A♦ J10♦ 6♦ 5♦

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1♦ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♦ Pass 1♦ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦A♦ QJ10♦ 9♦ 8♦ A♦ J10♦ 6♦ 5♦

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1♦ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♦ Pass 1♦ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♦A♦ QJ10♦ 9♦ 8♦ A♦ J10♦ 6♦ 5♦

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1♦ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♦ Pass 1♦ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♦A♦ QJ10♦ 9♦ 8♦ A♦ J10♦ 6♦ 5♦

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1♦ Pass 2♦ Pass

2♦ Pass 1♦ Pass

What do you bid now?

NEWS IN BRIEF

Illness delays U.N. Afghan mission

KABUL (R) — A U.N. peace mission in Afghanistan postponed an important meeting on Monday when its leader, former Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri, fell ill in the war-shattered capital, Kabul. Mr. Mestiri arrived in Kabul on Sunday and held talks with president Burhanuddin Rabbani and his arch-rival, Prime Minister Gulhuddin Hekmatyar, who launched his latest battle to topple the president on Jan. 1. Both Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Hekmatyar told the U.N. envoy they wanted peace but neither showed any sign of shifting from their long-held positions. Mr. Hekmatyar is demanding Mr. Rabbani's resignation while Mr. Rabbani says he has no plans to step down. Mr. Mestiri was due on Monday to meet former Defense Minister and veteran Mujahideen leader Ahmad Shah Masoud, who leads the president's troops and is believed to be the power that has enabled Mr. Rabbani to retain his post. The meeting was delayed after Mr. Mestiri fell ill. The mission was due to return to Pakistan on Tuesday.

Four killed in clashes in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — Police killed three suspected extremists in clashes Monday in Cairo and southern Egypt and a fourth died in an exchange of fire with armed civilians, police said. In both cases, police said the militants fired first but no casualties were reported among civilians or police officers. According to police, three extremists fired on villagers who spotted the radicals hiding in a field at Al Abada near Manfalut, 300 kilometres south of Cairo. The villagers fired back and injured one of the radicals, who later died. Police then arrived and gave chase, killing the other two extremists in an exchange of fire, police said. In Cairo, one suspected extremist was shot dead and another arrested, police said. They said the two extremists started shooting because they suspected police were following them, and police returned fire.

Disney president killed in crash

BURBANK, California (AP) — Frank Wells, the behind-the-scenes executive who helped propel the Walt Disney Co. to spectacular success with films such as "Pretty Woman," "Sister Act" and the animated "Aladdin," is dead. He was 62. Wells, Disney's president and chief operating officer, was killed Sunday when the helicopter he was riding crashed into a mountainside during a skiing expedition in central Nevada, said Elko County Sheriff Neil Harris. "There are no words to express my shock and sense of loss," said Michael Eisner, Disney's chief executive officer, in a statement. "Frank Wells has been the purest definition of a 'life force.' I have ever known. His wisdom, his charm, his zest for experience and challenge, his naked and awesome intelligence, set him apart and beyond. The world has lost a great human being."

China jails Hong Kong reporter

BEIJING (R) — China, signalling its determination to keep control of information, has jailed a Hong Kong reporter for 12 years and a clerk at the central bank for 15 years for spying and stealing financial secrets. A spokeswoman for the Beijing Intermediate court said on Monday that Xi Yang, a China-born reporter for the Hong Kong daily Ming Pao, and Tian Ye, a clerk at the People's Bank of China, had both been found guilty last week. Mr. Xi was sentenced to 12 years in prison and an additional two years deprivation of political rights for "stealing and spying on state secrets." Mr. Tian was jailed for 15 years and had his political rights removed for a further three years for helping foreigners steal and spy, and for illegally providing information about state secrets. Mr. Xi would appeal against sentence but Mr. Tian would not, the spokeswoman said.

7 SLA men wounded in Hizbullah attack

MARJAYOUN (AP) — A roadside bomb Monday wounded seven militiamen of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) in an Israeli-controlled border strip, security sources said. At least three of the wounded was in critical condition at a Tel Aviv hospital after the 4 p.m. (1400 GMT) attack outside the village of Taloula in the central sector of an Israeli-occupied "security zone," the sources said.

3 dead in Dutch plane crash

AMSTERDAM (R) — Three people were killed and 13 seriously hurt when a KLM Royal Dutch Airlines plane carrying 21 passengers and three crew crashed near Amsterdam's Schiphol airport on Monday, a KLM spokesman said. The twin Turbo-prop aircraft, flying from Schiphol to Cardiff in Wales on Cityhopper Flight KL 433, crashed about 3 p.m. (1300 GMT) as it tried to land after developing engine trouble over the North Sea shortly after take-off. The plane, a Swedish-built Saab 340B, came down close to a motorway linking Amsterdam and the Hague.

Iran renews support for Palestinian radicals

DAMASUS (R) — A senior Iranian official on Monday reiterated Iran's backing for a 10-member Palestinian alliance which has vowed to foil a peace deal between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Palestinian sources said. They said Hassan Rowhani, deputy speaker of Iran's parliament, made the pledge during talks with leaders of the alliance at the Iranian embassy in Damascus. "The meeting dealt with the mechanism needed to continue support for the Palestinian uprising and the 10-member alliance," one official said. "Rowhani affirmed Iran's continued support for the uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories and its rejection of the peace deals signed by the PLO and Israel," the official said. Mr. Rowhani, leading a parliamentary delegation, told reporters on arrival in Damascus on Sunday that he was carrying messages for Syrian President Hafez Al Assad from Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. He gave no details.

Iranian official hints at crackdown

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's interior minister Monday warned of harsh punishment for anyone transgressing the country's Islamic laws, auguring a renewed crackdown on dissent. Tehran Radio quoted Ali Mohammad Besharati as saying that the security forces would confront "social vice and the west's cultural onslaught." Mr. Besharati told a news conference in Tehran that now more than ever "the security forces will carry out their duties against violators of the laws and regulations, and will confront them severely." The government, facing a string of social and economic problems, has intensified security measures in recent months and Mr. Besharati has been given unprecedented powers to crack down on opponents.

PLO foreign affairs chief visits Vietnam

HANOI (R) — The foreign affairs chief of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Farouk Kaddoumi, arrived in Hanoi on Monday on an official visit to a long-time PLO supporter. Mr. Kaddoumi was due to hold talks with Vietnam's Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Gam, who welcomed him upon his arrival, and meet President Le Duc Anh and party chief Do Muoi on Tuesday.

Texas executes man for 1986 slaying

HUNTSVILLE, Texas (R) — A man convicted of kidnapping and murdering a Houston restaurant manager and raping the manager's wife in 1986 was put to death early Monday by lethal injection after volunteering to be executed. Richard Lee Beavers, 38, was pronounced dead at 12:25 a.m. CDT (1:29 EDT) (0525 GMT), about eight minutes after state officials began the flow of lethal drugs into tubes attached to his arms inside a state prison about 130 kilometres north of Houston, state officials said.

Wind change steers oil slick away from UAE

DUBAI (R) — A change in wind direction is steering a massive oil slick from a tanker collision away from main fishing ports and scenic beaches on the Arabian Sea, anti-pollution crew said on Monday.

An official in a company battling the 16,000-tonne spill that has already washed up on some beaches and affected marine life said the wind had changed course, pushing it about three kilometres from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) fishing port of Diba.

Skimmers and temporary storage vessels have so far collected around 2,200 tonnes of crude from the sea in an operation which is expected to take much longer than earlier anticipated.

"The effects could have been far worse if it was not for relatively favourable weather to an extent so far, and the quick response, anti-pollution crew were at the scene of the accident within two hours," Mr. Sarros said.

"God only knows how long it will take. It all depends on sea currents and the weather," said Capt. Kaimenakis.

"At first we thought the spill was between 7,000 and 8,000 tonnes. Now we know it is double that."

In Abu Dhabi, a cabinet meeting discussed the environmental disaster and agreed to allocate "immediate funds" to fight the spill, the Emirates News Agency said without giving figures.

Mr. Sarros said the oil has washed ashore affecting between 20 and 25 kilometres of the UAE's Arabian Sea coastline, a popular holiday spot famous also for its rich coral reefs and colourful marine life.

The UAE emirate of Fujairah has said the oil slick had severely polluted several beaches and is threatening more than 40 kilometres of coastline.

Officials say the disaster could have been much worse if the oil spilled had been heavy, like much of the crude produced in the Gulf. The cargo which is lapping the Arabian Sea beaches is of Iranian light crude oil originally destined for Japan. The 57,211-tonne Bayannah was returning home from Japan.

Assad pays surprise visit for talks with Mubarak

CAIRO (Agencies) — Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad Monday held talks with President Hosni Mubarak on the stalled peace negotiations between Israel and frontline Arab countries.

Mr. Mubarak received Mr. Assad at Cairo international airport, and the two leaders began talks after a welcoming ceremony at Al Qubah presidential palace. Mr. Assad was accompanied by vice-president Abdul Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Sharaa.

The government-owned Middle East News Agency (MENA) said the two presidents would discuss the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations. It gave no details.

The talks were apparently prompted by Syria's dissatisfaction with Egyptian support for Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace negotiations.

Mr. Assad is unhappy about Cairo's support for a process he sees as a blow to coordination between Arab countries negotiating with Israel, diplomats said.

Mr. Assad's visit was not announced in advance and it was unclear which side initiated it.

"Syria feels the (Israel-PLO) deals have severely harmed Arabs because ... they satisfied

Israeli demands at the expense

of the Palestinians," said a diplomat in the region.

"Syria also feels that ... the deals meant abandoning the badly needed coordination between Arabs," he said.

While some progress is being made on the Palestinian front, separate talks between Syria and Israel have made virtually no progress in 2½ years because of disagreement over the Golan Heights.

Mr. Assad is said to be looking to Egypt to persuade the United States to put pressure on Israel on the Golan.

"Syria wants Egyptian efforts to have Washington exert more pressure on Israel to force her to announce its readiness to withdraw fully from the Golan so progress can be made at the next round of talks due to resume in Washington at the end of this month," the Arab diplomat told Reuters.

Mr. Assad last came to Egypt in September shortly after the PLO signed the self-rule agreement with Israel, the PLO issue aside, relations between Egypt and Syria are good.

The Egyptian team in the talks with Syria included Prime Minister Atef Sedeek, Foreign Minister Amr Musa, Defence Minister Field Marshal Mohammad Tantawi and Information Minister Safwat Al-Sharif.

Teenager in last appeal on Singapore caning

SINGAPORE (R) — An American teenager sentenced to caning and imprisonment in Singapore for vandalism will appeal to President Ong Teng Cheong for clemency this week, his lawyer said on Monday.

Lawyer Dominic Nagulendran said Michael Peter Fay's stepfather and mother also plan to appeal to Ong for clemency, citing their son's mental health.

Caning was likely to be carried out within a few days if the president rejects the appeal, Nagulendran said.

Fay, 18, was sentenced to six strokes of the cane, four months in jail and \$1,500 Singapore dollar (\$2,000 for spray-painting cars. U.S. President Bill Clinton has called the sentence extreme but the U.S. government says it will not intervene.

Chief Justice Yong Pung How rejected Fay's appeal against the sentence on Thursday, saying the youth had committed at least 16 acts of vandalism over 10 days.

Caning was criticised in a U.S. State Department human rights report last year, but Singapore defends it as needed to stop the country from becoming crime-ridden like New York.

According to government figures, 12 Singaporeans and two foreigners aged 18 to 21 have been caned for vandalism since 1989. Offenders are normally permanently scarred.

Fay's father, George, told Reuters in the United States on Sunday he would seek to have the international committee of the Red Cross attend his son's caning to document what he called "a case of torture."

A prison department official said caning was carried out by a prison officer with a ruler and the prison superintendent present. He declined comment on whether the government would allow anyone else to be present.



NO-ONE IS SPARED: A Palestinian woman following a stone-throwing protest on Monday in Jericho in the occupied West Bank (AFP photo)

COLUMN 8

Protester disrupts Clinton's church service

WASHINGTON (AP) — An AIDS protester shouting from the balcony disrupted Easter Sunday church services attended by President Bill Clinton, his wife and daughter. Two Secret Service agents sitting in a pew directly behind the Clintons jumped to their feet and shielded the couple after a man yelled, "save your prayers for Bill Clinton". The disruption occurred about midway through the service at the Foundry United Methodist Church, breaking the silence immediately following a reading from the New Testament. Mr. Clinton later said he was not bothered by the disruption. The same protester interrupted a Clinton speech in December, prompting the president to say then, "I'd rather that man be in here screaming at me than having given up altogether."

Iran seized the islands of Greater Tunh and Lesser Tunh from the UAE in 1971. Tehran says Riyadh wants to halve the number of Iranian pilgrims during the annual Haj in May and condemned recent Iranian press attacks on the kingdom. Tehran says Riyadh wants to halve the number of Iranian pilgrims to about 60,000, in line with a country quota agreed by Muslim countries in 1988 to avoid congestion during renovation in Mecca and Medina.

Tehran Radio said that by condemning Iran the GCC had displayed its lack of impartiality, and was therefore unfit to solve any regional disputes. Until the GCC "is not impartial on regional issues it cannot help in any kind of political efforts for a solution," the radio said.

The GCC groups Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the UAE in a 12-year economic and security alliance that coordinates on foreign policy.

The Foreign Ministry statement said Iran "urges Saudi officials to facilitate the performance of this important divine obligation instead of breaking pledges and creating obstacles for Muslims wishing to go to Haj."

The GCC foreign ministers had voiced "full and absolute" support for Riyadh's efforts to

Tehran hits back at GCC over Gulf islands and Haj quotas

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran Monday denounced the Gulf Cooperation Council for backing the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia in their respective disputes with Tehran over territory and pilgrimage quotas.

An Iranian Foreign Ministry statement said a GCC statement issued Sunday in Riyadh supporting the two Arab states would contribute only to "the creation of discord among Muslims."

Tehran Radio, monitored in Nicosia, quoted the Iranian statement as saying the three Gulf islands at the centre of its dispute with the UAE belong to Iran.

"Repetition of groundless claims about the three islands belonging to the Islamic Republic of Iran will not change anything."

The statement accused the Sandi-led GCC of taking another step towards guaranteeing the interests of alien powers in the sensitive and strategic Persian Gulf.

However, the statement welcomed the GCC's call for talks to solve the dispute.

Iran laid claim to the island of Abu Musa, strategically placed at the mouth of the Gulf, in September 1992, following 20 years of joint control with the UAE.

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Rival claims shroud University of Jordan student elections

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Islamists and nationalists at the University of Jordan are divided over the result of the last week's students council elections.

Islamists believe that the number of seats they obtained in Wednesday's elections amount to 64, but nationalists insist they won 23 and that the Islamists were only able to secure 57 seats of the council's 80 seats.

"Islamists were running on group lists in all of the university's faculties so there could not be any error in our calculations," one Islamist observer said. "The 64 Islamist winners were nominated by the Islamic bloc to run for the elections and their names appeared on their lists."

The observer asserted that the nationalists, known as Al Watan Bloc, were spreading rumours shortly before the elections that they have nearly secured 40 seats in order to "make students believe that the Islamist bloc is regressing," he said.

The nationalists, on the other hand, believe that there has been more organisation this year than before pointing to the increase in competition and their sweeping victory at the Faculty of Law, where they won the five allotted seats.

While Islamists claim they won all of the 12 seats at the Faculty of Arts and Literature, the nationalists insist that they secured two for themselves. Nationalists also claim to have won one out of the 11 seats at the Faculty of Education, one of the five seats at the Faculty of Agriculture and one of the nine seats at the Faculty of Engineering while Islamists claim full control of all three faculties. At the Faculty of Business Administration, Islamists said they secured six out of the 11 seats while nationalists said they controlled eight seats.

According to government figures, 12 Singaporeans and two foreigners aged 18 to 21 have been caned for vandalism since 1989. Offenders are normally permanently scarred.

Fay's father, George, told Reuters in the United States on Sunday he would seek to have the international committee of the Red Cross attend his son's caning to document what he called "a case of torture."

A prison department official said caning was carried out by a prison officer with a ruler and the prison superintendent present. He declined comment on whether the government would allow anyone else to be present.

Caning was criticised in a U.S. State Department human rights report last year, but Singapore defends it as needed to stop the country from becoming crime-ridden like New York.

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